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Degree Completion Program and Graduate School Online Degrees Honored for Quality and Value

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner-Webb University is being recognized for exceptional web-based learning opportunities and was recently honored as a 2015 Top Online College in North Carolina by Affordable Colleges Online (ACO), based in Reno, Nev. Gardner-Webb ranked 15th out of 62 institutions of higher education in the state that offer online options, and the University was selected for the quality and value of its online programs.

With a score of 90.85 percent, GWU ranked ahead of several larger institutions, including North Carolina State University (Raleigh, N.C.), North Carolina A&T University (Greensboro, N.C.), and Johnson & Wales University (Charlotte, N.C.). Less than eight points separated GWU from the number-one institution on the list, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

“We are delighted to see this ranking for Gardner-Webb’s online programs by Affordable Colleges Online,” said Dr. Ben Leslie, GWU Provost and Executive Vice President.

“Controlling costs and tuition rates is indeed a priority for Gardner-Webb, because we recognize the critical importance of keeping higher education affordable and achievable for every income bracket. But our greatest priority is ensuring that the online educational experience is of the highest possible quality. At Gardner-Webb, we value affordability and emphasize an engaging online experience, flexible options, and above all, quality academic programs.”

Through the Degree Completion Program (DCP) at Gardner-Webb, students can take online courses to earn a bachelor’s degree in accounting, business administration, computer information systems, criminal justice, elementary education, entrepreneurship, healthcare management, nursing, and religion. Master’s degrees in accounting, business administration, international business administration, nursing, and sport pedagogy are also available in online formats at GWU.

According to ACO, 962 online programs were available at colleges and universities in North Carolina last year, with 230 graduate programs offered in online formats. Scoring was based on a variety of factors, such as: online tuition rate, total number of bachelor’s

degrees available, undergraduate student-faculty ratio, six-year graduation rate, percent of students receiving financial aid, academic and career counseling services, job placement opportunities for graduates, acceptance rate, loan default rate, and more.

ACO was established in 2012 to help parents and students locate educational opportunities that balance overall cost and program quality. In addition, the organization aims to offer information about the importance of accreditation. “As online classes become more prevalent, it is important to acknowledge the colleges and universities that go above and beyond,” said Dan Schuessler, founder and CEO of Affordable Colleges Online. “Our goal is to highlight these schools and their commitment to higher education. When it comes to online learning, these schools set the bar. These programs have made attending college accessible and affordable while maintaining rigorous academic standards of excellence and providing support services for their students.”

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University provides exceptional educational opportunities within a Christian environment, preparing students to think critically, to succeed professionally, and to serve faithfully as members of their local and global communities.